

# **The Office of Congresswoman Robin Kelly**



7/21/2016-7/22/2016

## **Make It In America**

Advancing strong and sustainable economic development legislation is one of Congresswoman Robin Kelly's top priorities, and Congresswoman Kelly believes that supporting homegrown businesses is an integral part of advancing and sustaining a strong economy. That's why Congresswoman Kelly visited 5 different companies in the second district over the span of 2 days to show her support for Illinois-based companies. Congresswoman Kelly also learned about these companies' products and services that are all made in Illinois and that benefit not only local communities but also America as a whole. Made in Illinois tour shows the strength of Illinois businesses and their impact on the local economy.

The businesses that Congresswoman Kelly visited teach STEAM Education to young leaders, support underserved communities, create jobs right here at home, export their products worldwide, and continue to grow and develop. They represent the ideals of the Made in Illinois initiative and the broader Make It In America initiative. Congresswoman Kelly strongly supports both of these initiatives and will continue to do so in the future.



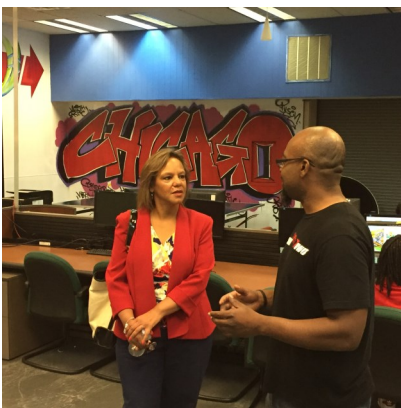
# Blue 1647

## STEAM Education

Congresswoman Kelly met with Emile Cambry, the founder and CEO of Blue 1647, one of the largest minority-owned technology and entrepreneurship incubators in the country. The company has locations expanding across the Midwest, including the location that Congresswoman Kelly visited in the predominantly Latino Pilsen neighborhood.

During her visit, Congresswoman Kelly and Emile Cambry talked about some of Blue 1647's signature youth programs including the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth Project (21CYP), which teaches youths skills that lay the foundation for employment in advanced technology, the Internship Acceleration program, which matches minority undergraduate and high school students with mentors, and Latina Girls Code, which provides resources, education, and a community for young women who are passionate about technology.

All of these programs give young leaders the opportunity to create, construct, and make their dreams a reality. These STEAM programs prepare students for the 21st century economy. Congresswoman Kelly believes that it is crucial that our students are equipped with the necessary skills the market demands to ensure success in the modern economy.



Congresswoman Kelly meeting with young entrepreneurs at Blue 1647

Congresswoman Kelly meeting with young entrepreneurs at Blue 1647



Students working on a project in Blue 1647 Collaboration areas

# Best Diamond Plastics

## Exporting Products

Congresswoman Kelly met with Mark Tolliver, co-founder and president of Best Diamond Plastics, a company that provides paper products, plastic products, baked goods, and packaging supplies for companies around the world. Some popular franchises that receive the company's products include Jewel Foods, Burger King, McDonalds, Red Lobster, Olive Garden, and Denny's.

The circulation of these commodities ensures success for people not only in Chicago, Illinois but also around the world. Best Diamond Plastics not only creates local jobs but is also able to export its products around the globe.



Congresswoman Kelly with Mark Tolliver of Best Diamond Plastics

Congresswoman Kelly taking a tour of the Best Diamond Plastic's facilities





# South Works Maker Lab

## Supporting Underserved Communities

Congresswoman Kelly met with Don Brozek, coordinator of the Park Forest Maker Lab, as well as Mollie Dowling, Executive Director of OAI. She visited a facility where members of the community can create electronic and physical devices.

Maker labs encourage sharing, education, and creativity among their members and the surrounding community. One of their critical missions is to provide resources to underserved populations within the community. The South Works Maker Lab does this through programs such as K-12 STEAM, manufacturing career training, and entrepreneurship. They are also partnered with several colleges and universities to expand their resources to students and different communities.

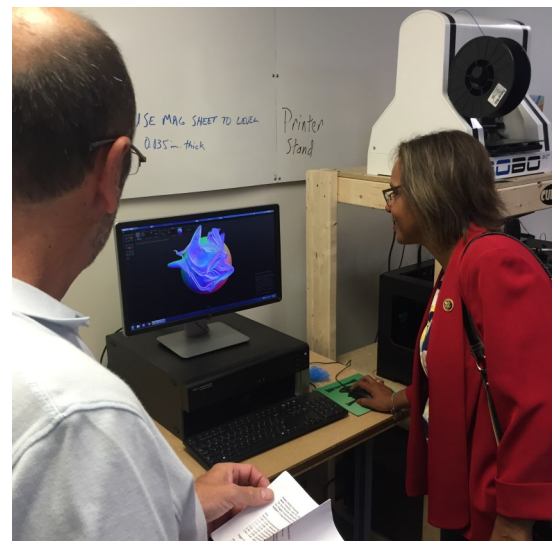


Congresswoman Kelly looking at what the Maker Lab's 3D printer is able to create



Congresswoman Kelly taking a tour of the Maker Lab's 3D printing lab.

Congresswoman Kelly looking at the Maker Lab's 3D printer



# Chicago Magnesium Casting Co.

## Jobs Here At Home

Congresswoman Kelly met with Richard Burnett, co-owner and son of the company founder, Donald Burnett, and Robert Littlefield, President and CEO of the company. Chicago Magnesium employs about 135 people and is one of the largest defense contractors in Congresswoman Kelly's district. It manufactures complex engine parts for the aerospace industry, including parts for commercial airlines, military aircraft, and outer space travel. Major clients include Boeing, Airbus, NASA, and branches of the US military.

Big companies like the Chicago Magnesium Casting Co. that are located right here in Illinois create jobs here at home and grow our local economy.



Congresswoman Kelly meeting with company workers in the lunchroom to discuss the state of manufacturing



Congresswoman Kelly with Chicago Magnesium Co. employees



Seeing the finished product on a foundry tour with Richard Burnett, (co-owner and son of company founder, Donald Burnett) and Robert Littlefield (President/CEO).

# Sterling Lumber Co.

## Company Growth

Congresswoman Kelly met with Carter Sterling, CEO, one of the sons/owners of Sterling Lumber Co. The company produces lumber but also a wide range of wooden products – including pallets, crates, and wooden platforms.

Sterling Lumber is a second-generation, family-owned lumber business that's one of the fastest growing businesses in the Midwest. Headquartered in Phoenix, IL it has 225 employees in three locations in two states. Its products are shipped worldwide, as Sterling Lumber is the world's leading producer of "crane mats", which are what cranes sit on during construction of pipelines, highways, buildings, etc.

Sterling has won many awards for being the region's top manufacturer. It is known for its outstanding customer service and its support of local economic development efforts. They are known for enhancing major infrastructure projects such as toll roads, overpasses, and highways. New technology will allow Sterling to triple its size over the next 5 years and likely beyond. The company's growth will lead to overall economic growth in Illinois.



Congresswoman Kelly meeting with Sterling's leaders to discuss the company's growth.